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SUBJECT: PROPOSED SUPPORT TO GAZIANTEP AMERICAN HOSPITAL

REF: STATE 175490

[1](#)1. Embassy Ankara strongly supports the reftel proposal to provide a \$600,000 ASHA grant to Gaziantep American Hospital. Embassy's evaluation of Gaziantep American Hospital is keyed to questions in reftel para 4.

a and b) Gaziantep American Hospital has a long and well-known history as a symbol of American generosity and support for the people of Turkey, dating back to its founding in 1851. During most of its history it has featured American doctors. The former Regional Medical Officer (RMO) responsible for Turkey described the hospital as "a citadel of great potential for reaching out and serving a region of Turkey lacking in decent (western standard) health care." The hospital includes a medical education center and features extensive outreach programs.

c) The former RMO conducted an extensive tour of the hospital in June 2004. He was impressed by the physical layout of the hospital and the professionalism of the staff. He was especially impressed by the hospital's medical director and demonstrated his confidence in the hospital by referring difficult cases to the hospital, including one medevac from Kirkuk, Iraq.

d) Turkey's health care system provides uneven care and suffers from chronic underfinancing. Southeast Turkey, where the Gaziantep American Hospital is located, is underdeveloped and medical care is poor. Turkey's medical universities provide outstanding training for doctors and specialists, and medical services in the big cities and for middle and upper class Turks is generally very good. However, medical care outside of the big cities and in the underdeveloped regions of Turkey is of poorer quality. Providing modern medical technology for the Gaziantep American Hospital will demonstrate the long-term commitment of the United States to Turkey and its people. Embassy would showcase the donation, perhaps including the participation of the Ambassador and the consulate in nearby Adana.

[1](#)2. Embassy would be pleased to answer any questions. POC is Economics Officer Kurt Donnelly. donnellykd@state.gov. EDELMAN